

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

## INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: June 4, 2020

To: Aram Sahakian, General Manager  
Emergency Management Department

From: Personnel and Uniform Workplace Safety Protocols Committee

Subject: **PERSONNEL AND UNIFORM WORKPLACE SAFETY PROTOCOLS - V1.4**

As Mayor Garcetti begins to lift the Safer at Home order in phases, a safe and healthy workplace for employees and visitors is the top priority for the City. Without exception, each workplace must be prepared with safety measures in place before employees return.

In addition to the departmental Reconstitution Plans for the gradual and safe return of employees to their workspaces, the following uniform workplace safety requirements to resume services were established to assist departments with their planning.

This document is consistent with Federal, State, and local regulations and guidance and best practices based on what is known about how the virus spreads today. At this time, we know the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).<sup>1</sup> Updates will be made as more employees return and new information emerges.

### I. Telecommuting

- ☐ Maximize and continue telecommuting and teleconferencing opportunities whenever possible to reduce exposure risk.
- ☐ Establish telecommuting guidelines for employees as each operation demands (e.g., check in/out, scheduled check-ins, and action item checklists utilizing [this link](#) for resources).
- ☐ Vulnerable staff (65 and older, those who are pregnant, and those with chronic health conditions) should be assigned work that can be completed from home whenever possible, per LA County Department of Public Health.
- ☐ Vulnerable staff (65 and older, those who are pregnant, and those with chronic health conditions) who choose to work in the office can do so; arrangements shall be made to ensure their safety.

### II. Employee Health and Safety and Entry to Departmental Workplaces

- ☐ Require ADA-compliant signage establishing protocols for health and safety to be posted at each entry way and distributed to all employees.
- ☐ Employees shall be required to wear face coverings properly that cover both the nose and mouth in the workplace if they are outside of their individual office, workstation or immediate job site area (e.g., in common areas and hallways or aisles on floors) or if the employee is in close

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), "How COVID-19 Spreads," May 24, 2020 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#How-COVID-19-Spreads>).

contact with others (e.g., conversation with another employee or in elevators with others). Exceptions must be made for those who are unable to wear face coverings for medical reasons.

- ❑ Departments shall procure and provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies for employees, at a level appropriate to job duties. Departments should maintain a supply of disposal face coverings in the event an employee does not have a face covering.
- ❑ Employees shall be encouraged to frequently wash their hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds, to avoid touching their face, and to use alcohol based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- ❑ Employees shall be allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands and to walk outside (while maintaining social distancing) to remove their face coverings.
- ❑ Create a mechanism for employees to offer suggestions or submit individual concerns within their workplace.
- ❑ Require all employees, especially supervisors, to understand the City's protocol for responding to a COVID-19 incident as outlined in the Personnel Department Notification and Cleaning memo, dated April 13, 2020.
- ❑ Every employee should conduct a Daily Self Check screening prior to reporting to work. Signage will be posted at the entrance(s) of all buildings to remind employees.
- ❑ For departments implementing temperature screening, the following protocols are recommended:
  - ❑ Employer-administered temperature checks are not mandated by County Order, except for high-risk areas/facilities. Therefore, require high-risk facilities/areas (e.g., LAFD, LAPD, Correctional Care, Medical Services) where healthcare workers and first responders work to have the following protocols in place:
    - ❑ Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings<sup>2</sup> for all workers at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering such establishments. Department to determine who will screen employees.
    - ❑ Follow the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidance regarding confidentiality of medical records from health checks.
    - ❑ Make employee health screenings as private as possible.
    - ❑ Conduct checks virtually or in-person.
    - ❑ Conduct in-person checks consistent with Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) guidelines
- ❑ Require signage on safety requirements, such as handwashing, physical distancing and what to do if employees are feeling sick, to be posted in the workplace and update departmental websites with information about revised access, process and protocols with notification that these may create delays in service before increasing employee presence in the workplace more than 10%. See Signage and Messaging Guidance [link](#).
- ❑ Require only authorized employees and visitors to access the workplace, limiting access of contractors and vendors to specific work areas.

### **III. Building-wide issues in high rise and other facilities**

- ❑ Require signage, HVAC and other building system recommendations, and physical distancing requirements in common areas, e.g., lobby, stairwells, elevator cabs and waiting areas, to be consistent with CDC, and local public health recommendations, before increasing employee presence in the workplace more than 10% .

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<sup>2</sup> Symptom screening includes asking questions such as "Is your body temperature 100 degrees or higher? Do you have cold or flu-like symptoms? Have you tested positive for COVID-19, and have not completed isolation and recovery? Have you had close contact with a person with COVID-19 or in quarantine? Have you lost your sense of taste or smell?"

- ❑ Elevators must be limited to 1 to 4 occupants per ride depending on the size of the elevators, standing in diagonal corners maintaining social distancing protocol as much as feasible. Facial coverings must be worn at all times while riding in an elevator.
- ❑ Employees should be discouraged from touching any elevator buttons (inside and outside the cab) with their bare hands, but should use an elbow, pencil, or gloved hand. Employees should also be encouraged to use stairs when possible while wearing gloves to hold the stair railings or wash hands immediately following stair use without touching the face. Directional signage on elevator floors should be utilized, if available. Departments in multi-tenant, high rise buildings are asked to coordinate their plans so they do not impact the operations of other departments.
- ❑ Departments should work closely and comply with all leased buildings to ensure they are following the established guidelines set by the leasing company.
- ❑ GSD is currently working on a plan for lobbies and common areas of high rises and constituent service centers.

#### **IV. Physical Distancing Measures**

- ❑ Work with employees to adjust work schedules to achieve maximum social distancing by providing for staggering work shifts, rotation between being in the workplace and telecommuting (e.g., A and B shifts), etc. Avoid overlapping shifts or rotations, if possible.
- ❑ Minimize the number of employees in the workplace by evaluating departmental occupancy and capacity to maintain six feet of physical distancing between employee work or break areas, and six feet of physical distancing between visitors and employees.
- ❑ Use videoconferencing or teleconferencing when possible for work-related meetings and gatherings. When this is not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces continuing to maintain a distance of six feet apart and wear cloth face coverings.
- ❑ Use six-foot visual cues (e.g., floor markings, colored tape, etc.) to keep employees and the public safe and as needed.
- ❑ Consider installing physical barriers, circulation modifications, layout adjustments, and furniture removal to achieve six feet of physical distancing within workplaces. Space reconfigurations and modifications including the use of plexiglass and other barriers such as full-height shielding should be limited solely to those workplace areas where physical distancing cannot be achieved by other means.
- ❑ Submit requests for workplace space reconfigurations, plexiglass and other barriers and modifications to the EOC for resource determinations. EOC staff will coordinate with your department, departmental safety officers, and the Personnel Department's Citywide Occupational Safety and Health Division and the Department of General Services to determine the safest and most feasible approach. If EOC is not activated, please contact GSD at (213) 978-1157.
- ❑ Direct employees not to share work tools or equipment, including office equipment. If equipment is shared, employees should be directed to conduct cleaning and disinfection between uses.
- ❑ Direct employees to refrain from entering another employee's work area to search for items or borrow equipment.
- ❑ Minimize non-essential out-of-state employee travel.

#### **V. Customer-facing Departments/Public Counters**

- ❑ Require signage (utilizing [this link](#)) at each public entrance of the facility to inform all employees and customers they should: avoid entering the facility if they have COVID-19 symptoms; maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another; wear mandatory face coverings to enter the building; sneeze and cough into a cloth or tissue or, if not available, into one's elbow, and not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact. Signage is required before increasing employee presence in the workplace more than 10%

- ❑ Inform customers or visitors they must, at their own expense and provision, wear facial coverings that cover both nose and mouth and practice appropriate physical distancing consistent with public health protocols.
- ❑ Instruct employees to maintain at least six feet distance from customers and from each other, except employees may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or as otherwise necessary.
- ❑ Inform customers they may be refused service if they are exhibiting COVID-19 like symptoms or not wearing a facial covering.
- ❑ Utilize teleconferencing, appointments and reservation systems, develop no-touch drop-off or electronic submittal of documents, make curbside service available where feasible.

## **VI. Employees working in the field**

- ❑ Discourage tool and equipment sharing, if possible. If not possible, require tools and equipment to be sanitized before between uses.
- ❑ Limit the number of employees in a City vehicle to two (the driver and one passenger). The passenger should sit in the back seat opposite the driver of the vehicle. If there is only the cab of a work truck, it is recommended that the other employees drive their own vehicles to the work location and be provided with mileage pay.
- ❑ Vehicles should be cleaned and sanitized in between usage.
- ❑ Employees shall be allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands and walk outside or away from their work area (while maintaining social distancing) to remove their face coverings.
- ❑ Employees shall wear face coverings (which must cover the nose and mouth) when interacting with the public.

## **VII. Training**

The Personnel Department will distribute training materials to require employees be trained on the following:

- What is COVID-19, symptoms, how to prevent, how it is spread
- City procedures/policies for preventing the spread of COVID-19
- What to do and when to seek medical attention
- General hygiene - hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Use of PPE
- Cloth and disposable face coverings
- Social distancing
- Safe work practices
- Stress management

Departments must require every employee receive the above informational training on COVID-19. Department may supplement this with additional training/information as it pertains to their operation and/or facility. Maintain documentation that each employee has completed such training.

## **VIII. Cleaning**

- ❑ GSD will continue to provide COVID-19 disinfection services at City facilities under the Personnel Department Guidelines Citywide Notification and Cleaning memo, dated April 13, 2020 (utilize this [link](#) for access to memo).

- ❑ Department plans should include guidance for employees to keep their personal work areas sanitized, including assigned vehicles, copy machines and specialized tools and equipment. Departments shall provide cleaning materials and gloves to employees for these purposes.
- ❑ Employees should be encouraged to regularly wipe down their personal work stations and equipment during their shifts.

#### **IX. Sick Leave/FFCRA Policies**

- ❑ Require employees exhibiting COVID-19 like symptoms to stay home. Symptoms may include frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell.
- ❑ Employees who were recently exposed to COVID-19 or someone they live with had been recently diagnosed with COVID-19, may be directed to stay home.
- ❑ Employees directed or ordered to go or stay home due to COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms will receive paid administrative leave. Employees can telecommute if they feel well enough to do so.
- ❑ Physician note requirements will be temporarily relaxed and employees shall be encouraged to stay home if they are sick.
- ❑ On April 1, 2020, the federal government passed the FFCRA which regulates paid leave requirements for employers. Subsequently, the City released a memo updating the leave policy in compliance with the FFCRA. Please see [this link](#) for a copy of the City's COVID-related leave policy to be in effect for COVID-related leaves taken through December 31, 2020.

#### **X. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and free COVID-19 test registration**

- ❑ Departments should make available the City's EAP program which is available for employees feeling anxious about exposure to the coronavirus or those returning to work. Employees needing assistance should be encouraged to contact the City's Employee Assistance Provider, Optum at 1-800-213-5813.
- ❑ Departments should make available in the workplace the following link for registering for free COVID-19 testing: <https://corona-virus.la>

#### **XI. Withdrawal Plan (resurgence)**

- ❑ All positive COVID-19 cases must be reported to the Medical Services Division immediately using [this link](#). If you have any questions, please contact Joanne O'Brien, Medical Services Division, at [joanne.obrien@lacity.org](mailto:joanne.obrien@lacity.org).
- ❑ In the event that five or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days, the department shall report this outbreak to the Medical Services Division or the Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821.
- ❑ In the event of a second COVID-19 outbreak, departments must have plans to scale back services and begin returning the majority of employees to telecommuting, paid administrative leave, and/or other safety measures in a short time frame.
- ❑ Reconvene the Personnel and Workplace Safety Task Force to provide assistance, as needed.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact Personnel Department Assistant General Manager Deborah Caruso at (213) 473-9055.